United Nations A/57/579–S/2002/1214

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
30 October 2002

Original: English

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session
Agenda items 36 and 160

Security Council
Fifty-seventh year

The situation in the Middle East

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 29 October 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to draw your attention to the latest incident in the Palestinian terrorist campaign directed against the citizens of Israel.

This past Sunday, 27 October 2002, at approximately 11.30 a.m. (local time), a Palestinian suicide bomber approached a gasoline station near the community of Ariel. He was spotted by an alert attendant as he headed for a nearby cafeteria. Security officers and nearby soldiers immediately confronted the terrorist and in the ensuing struggle, the terrorist's explosives were detonated. Three Israelis were killed in the explosion and 18 others were wounded. Reports indicate that both the Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades, the terrorist wing of Chairman Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction, and the terrorist organization Hamas, claimed responsibility for the bombing.

Israel holds the Palestinian leadership fully responsible for this attack, as it does for all terrorist attacks emanating from the territory under its control. Despite repeated demands for action, the Palestinian leadership has failed to fulfil its responsibilities to end all acts of violence and terrorism. Nor has it taken any steps to fulfil its responsibilities under the recently adopted Security Council resolution 1435 (2002), a resolution adopted at the initiative of the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine. That resolution demands an end to all acts of violence, terrorism and incitement and calls for those responsible for terrorist acts to be brought to justice — none of which the Palestinian leadership has even begun to undertake.

Instead of operating a justice system that would hold terrorists and their supporters accountable for their crimes, Palestinian security courts have handed down a steady number of harsh sentences directed solely at opponents and critics of the Palestinian Authority. The Palestinian failure to fulfil their obligations is not a failure of ability, but rather of the necessary political will. In light of this, Israel is left with no choice but to exercise its right to self-defence and to take measures to

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protect the lives of its citizens, while continuing to do its utmost to alleviate the humanitarian situation of the Palestinian people.

Israel expects the international community to condemn Sunday's attack in the strongest terms. The ongoing role of those under the direct authority of Chairman Arafat in the perpetration of suicide bombings and other criminal acts of terrorism must be similarly denounced.

Israel urges the Palestinian leadership to fulfil its obligations under signed agreements reached with Israel as well as under resolution 1435 (2002) to arrest terrorist leaders and bring them to justice and to end incitement in the official media. The Palestinian leadership must also take steps to end all financial, logistical and moral support for acts of terrorism in accordance with Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1373 (2001).

The restoration of hope for both Israelis and Palestinians and a return to a process of dialogue aimed at achieving a lasting political settlement will only be possible once the Palestinians fully reject terrorism, both in word and deed, and live up to their obligations to resolve all outstanding issues through negotiations.

I submit this letter in follow-up to numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism that began in September 2000.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as an official document of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 36 and 160, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative